

Appleby Archaeology Group

Notes of the Annual General Meeting of the Appleby Archaeology Group which took place on Tuesday January 13th 2015 at Centre 67, Appleby at 7.30pm.

Present

Committee members: 6	Members of the group: 30		
Phyllis Rouston	Chairman	Martin Railton	Fieldwork/Research
Mike Godfrey	Treasurer	Richard Stevens	Secretary
Heather Edwards	Membership Secretary		
Martin Joyce	Newsletter Editor		

Apologies for Absence

Carol Dougherty, Ron and Chris Lyon, Carol Mitchell, Janet Woodman, Jen Callis, Christine and David Butler, Maggie and Steve Thompson, Ian Walker.

Minutes of the last AGM 14/01/2014

The minutes had been circulated to all members with the winter Newsletter. There being no errors identified, the minutes were approved by the meeting.

1/2015 Matters arising from the notes

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

2/2015 Chairman's Report

The chairman thanked those present for attending the 16th AGM. She was happy to report that the Group retained a loyal membership that currently stood at 73, the highest since the Group's formation. All the talks had been well attended and the summer outings had been well supported this year. The visits to Appleby Castle and to Hartlepool were highlights of the summer programme, an encouraging result for the committee, and she duly thanked the members who took part.

She went on to say that one major change during the year had been the move to the new venue, Centre 67, in September. It had become increasingly obvious that the Market Hall was not suitable for a group of our size. Over several weeks in the spring the committee had sought an alternative, in the process learning of the many groups that meet in Appleby. Overall, the response to the move had been positive and early problems are being resolved. In future, places will be reserved at the front for the two members who use wheel chairs, together with their companions.

The chairman explained that the Group had been unable to do any field work during the year, partly because the very wet spring had prevented further field walking and partly because the link with the Altogether Archaeology Project in the North Pennines AONB had come to an end. Because of this, the committee had explored a number of future options and had sought the opinions of the membership. The results of our deliberations would be explained during the Fieldwork Report.

She said that the Group had continued with their efforts to interest younger people in Archaeology. The committee had received positive initial responses to the letters sent at the end of 2013, from both Appleby and Kirby Stephen Grammar Schools. Trish Shaw has had some communication with Kirkby Stephen and currently had two sessions booked to talk to students at Appleby Grammar in February. There had been further contacts with Penrith Museum regarding the setting up of a Young Archaeologists Club but unfortunately cuts to Museum funding, together with minimal local interest have led to the idea being shelved.

The chairman explained that there had been changes in the Committee during the year. Stephen Walker had resigned in the spring because he was moving to Edinburgh. On behalf of the whole group, she thanked Stephen for the valuable contribution he had made to the committee and to

the Group. The committee were not at present seeking a replacement member but would welcome any member to join them for one of their quarterly business meetings. Anyone interested could contact any member of the committee for details. In December, Carol Dougherty had asked to be relieved of her role as membership secretary and Heather Edwards had taken on the task. Carol had done an excellent job for three years and the chairman thanked her on behalf of the Group. She said that Heather had been able to ease into the role with few problems and wished her well. She also thanked Richard who had taken on the production of posters, which are now emailed to other committee members who then copy and circulate them.

In conclusion, the chairman thanked the committee for their hard work and support as she looked forward to our 17th year.

3/2015 Secretary's Report

The Secretary began by saying that, unsurprisingly, things had been much the same as last year. There had been a good attendance at all of our meetings, especially so at the second meeting of the winter, where people were crammed into the new venue to hear all about the Crosby Garrett helmet. He thought that the Group had managed to maintain the standard reached in previous years regarding the selection of speakers and that the committee would try to keep this up. The cost of attracting speakers was an issue that the committee needed to monitor, firstly because of the increasing cost of travel expenses in general (notwithstanding the current dip in fuel prices) and secondly because, in trying to find new subjects, it was becoming necessary to look further afield for speakers.

Ron Lyon and Harry Hawkins had provided excellent talks at last year's member's evening and they had been followed by Blaise Vyner from North Yorkshire, Mark Graham from Grampus Heritage and Training and then Dot Boughton from the PAS. So far this season our subjects had included Hornby Castle, the aforementioned Crosby Garrett helmet and the history of Cumbrian Ports, the last mentioned being the first of a trio of talks on watery subjects during the current season. Once again, three out of our four summer outings had been very well attended, the exception being the tour of Shap Abbey with Harry Hawkins. He said that he thought that most members had been to the Abbey at least once but ventured to say that, like Heineken, a guided tour of Shap with Harry, with his encyclopaedic knowledge of the site, most definitely reaches the parts that other tours can't reach.

Richard went on to say that the Group were maintaining the connection with the Council for British Archaeology and were taking a full part in their efforts to widen community involvement in archaeology. With the seemingly endless reductions in funding to local government, community groups in various combinations with Universities and commercial operators will continue to take an increasingly important role in the future of archaeology. The committee wanted to ensure that our group will be well placed to participate in that future.

The secretary reported that committee meetings had been held regularly, planning the year ahead and keeping a check on finances. Reports of all the talks had appeared in the newsletter of course as well as the Cumberland and Westmorland Herald. Regarding communication with the membership, he said that, as before, any correspondence that he received which he thought might be of interest to the membership, would be notified by email. So far, nobody had complained about receiving unwanted emails from him and so he hoped that meant he was doing the right thing. He said that there were now just 5 members for whom he had no email address and that he would continue to advise them of any significant or urgent matters by phone.

Finally, he thanked Martin Joyce for the continuing high standard of the newsletter and website and also Martin Railton for the Facebook page. He had particular thanks for the one or two members who 'liked' each and every update.

4/2015 Treasurer's Report

The treasurer presented the financial report for the year. The accounts had been audited as usual by Peter Bridge and an audited report was available for inspection. The opening balance for the year was £468.36 and the closing balance £415.56, indicating that the Group had again balanced income and expenditure. He saw no necessity at present to adjust the level of subscriptions. As stated at previous AGMs, the costs of printing the newsletter had been substantially reduced

because of the kind assistance of Wardell Armstrong Archaeology, whom we once again thank for their help.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Martin Railton, seconded by Richard Stevens and approved by the meeting.

5/2015 Fieldwork and Research Report

Martin began by explaining the situation regarding Altogether Archaeology and the work we had conducted under their auspices at Brackenber Moor. There were apparently no funds available within the project to complete either the excavation or the post excavation work on the 2013 excavation. The committee wished to see the work completed and published, and this would mean obtaining some pottery dating, carbon 14 dates and conservation of the collared urn. In order to do this, the Group would approach CWAAS for a grant to enable the work to be funded and Martin said that he would combine all the outstanding results into one report which could be published in the Transactions.

He went on to outline the work that the committee had decided upon for the future. This would shift the focus of attention into Appleby itself. The idea would consist of a series of mini-projects examining the history of the town. This might be in the form of small weekend excavations in various places or even a 'big dig' style event. This idea resulted from the findings of the excavation carried out by North Pennines Archaeology a few years ago at the top of Boroughgate, about which Martin had previously talked to the Group. He said that he was at present working on the details and would report further in a forthcoming issue of the newsletter.

6/2015 Election of Officers and Committee members

The chairman advised the meeting that the three officers were presenting themselves for re-election and asked for approval by the meeting. No other nominations being received, the re-election of Phyllis Rouston, Mike Godfrey and Richard Stevens was proposed by Margaret Albon and seconded by Marjorie Campion.

All other members of the committee offered themselves for re-election. There were no other nominations from the floor and so the re-election of Heather Edwards, Carol Dougherty, Martin Joyce and Martin Railton was proposed by Anne Crosby and seconded by Trish Shaw.

All of these appointments were approved by the meeting.

7/2015 AOB

The chairman was happy to tell the meeting that the Appleby in Westmorland Society had complimented the Group on the high standard of the newsletter.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.55pm.

Richard Stevens 17th January 2015